

**Nutritional status, dietary habits and associated factors of grade eleven school children in the MOH area Kalutara**

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A descriptive cross sectional study among 356 girls and 283 boys attending grade eleven Type IAB, and Type 1 C state schools in the Kalutara Medical Officer of Health area was carried out. Nutritional status was assessed in three stages. 1. Body mass index 2. The cut off values recommended by the World Health Organization 3. The prevalence of thinness. Statistically significant association was observed between the nutritional status and the sex (girls heavier than the boys,  $p < 0.0001$ ) and the monthly family income ( $p < 0.1$ ), and the source of influence on food preference did not show a statistically significant relationship with the frequency of taking snacks ( $p < 0.1$ ). The physical activity pattern showed that the children taking part in organized sport in school was low. This study shows the high prevalence of thinness and a considerable proportion of children at risk of obesity. It is recommended that surveillance of nutritional status and targeted programmes for intervention and health promotion for the adolescents are carried out in the district. The results and recommendations of this study is also of value to the educational and health policy makers and planners